



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY ENGINEER DISTRICT, HONOLULU
FORT SHAFTER, HAWAII 96858-5440

CEPOH-DE (100)

12 November 2002

COMMANDER'S POLICY MEMORANDUM #12

SUBJECT: After Action Review Standards and Procedures

1. Purpose and Applicability: This memo establishes how the Honolulu District will conduct After Action Reviews (AARs) and capture, formulate, address, resolve, and disseminate lessons learned. This memo applies to all work, and all offices, sections, branches and divisions within the District. Procedures detailing the use of DrChecks are published in POHR 1110-1-5, dated 30 July 2001, located at <http://www.pod.usace.army.mil/info/hedreg.html>. A summary of AAR requirements appears in the Project Management Business Process (PMBP) Standing Operating Procedures (SOP) #9, AAR.
2. Background and Definition: The purpose of the AAR is to learn, to improve, and to document both successes and deficiencies. The overarching focus of the AAR process is improvement. The requirement to capture lessons learned, and review lessons learned prior to project initiation, is now a part of the USACE business process. I consider our ability to conduct an effective AAR critical to the success of the Honolulu District. *The longevity of the District hinges on our ability to learn from our successes and mistakes, and get a little better each day.*
3. Commander's Intent: My intent is that Honolulu District improves on how we deliver projects, products, services, and our overall level of customer service through the AAR process. My expectation is that AARs will occur routinely, openly, and lead to positive change and reinforce success. We will take the time to conduct AARs.
4. Responsibilities: Every member of the District is responsible for promoting an atmosphere of honesty, openness, and continuous learning to facilitate the AAR process. Leaders set the tone in this regard. In general, the AAR process follows this simple model: identify the *issue*; *discuss* the issue; develop a *recommendation*; and complete an *action* to resolve the issue. (This model follows the ISO 9001:2000 model of plan, do, check, and act.)
 - a. **All Staff Elements:** Provide key lessons learned during the proceeding quarter to PPMD when queried.

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b. **PPMD:**

(1) Establish a tracking system for project AARs to ensure they are scheduled, conducted, and posted. Present and brief this data during monthly Project Review Boards. Ensure all AARs are posted to the District Engineer's calendar.

(2) On a quarterly basis, NLT seven calendar days after the end of the quarter, disseminate key lessons learned to the District. Conduct a data call throughout the District to gather this information. Ensure this information is posted to the District's Intranet site.

c. **RM:** Establish a tracking system for non-project AARs to ensure they are scheduled, conducted, and posted. Present this data during quarterly OPLAN updates.

5. Definitions: AARs are either informal or formal.

a. **Informal AAR:** This AAR is less structured and takes less time. It is conducted anywhere, anytime, for any event, by anyone. Examples: Following a PDT meeting; following a conference call; or as part of a safety briefing/tool-box meeting. Document informal project AARs by memo per PMBP SOP #9, AAR. Document other AARs as appropriate. Project Managers (PMs) or other interested parties may facilitate their own informal AARs.

b. **Formal AAR:** This AAR requires more structure, requires planning, and takes longer to conduct. The formal AAR usually occurs immediately or soon after an event is completed. It can also occur while the event is in-progress. Examples: Completion of a design, construction project, or regulatory permitting process; completion of the year-end contracting period; or District-wide installation of computer software or hardware. Documentation is required for all formal AARs, per PMBP SOP #9, AAR. A neutral third party may facilitate formal AARs.

6. Conducting the AAR: Plan and conduct AARs in accordance with the AAR Guidelines as published in PMBP SOP #9, AAR. The PDT, customers, and stakeholders will form the body that composes the AAR. Invite contractors to attend (at no cost to the Government). **In the case of project AARs, minimum focus areas are performance standards related to budget/cost, schedule, quality, customer satisfaction, and safety. For all AARs, be sure to address "what went right" and how to sustain high level performance/results.**

7. AAR Location: Customer attendance and level of feedback at AARs is increased when we conduct AARs at the customer's location. Therefore, plan to do this when it makes sense to do so.

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8. AAR Requirements: PMs are required to budget for and conduct an AAR for every project. PMs will schedule AARs in their Project Management Plan (PMP), ensure at least formal AARs are annotated to the District's Long Range Calendar, conduct and publish the results of the AAR, and ensure the AAR is posted to the DrChecks corporate lessons learned system and the District intranet site. Conduct AARs as follows:

a. AARs for projects coded RED: Regardless of dollar value of the project, PMs will conduct a formal AAR for any project rated RED at any time during the life of the project.

b. AARs for projects **below** \$3M: PMs will schedule and conduct an informal *or* formal AAR. Issues, discussion, recommendations, and actions may be collected via a meeting, email, or other means. In any case, the PM will document the AAR by memo, per PMBP SOP #9, AAR. PMs will also complete the top portion of the design or construction Project Completion Customer Surveys, and ask the customer to complete the report. Forward the report to PPMD.

c. AARs for projects **above** \$3M: PMs will schedule and conduct a formal AAR, per the AAR Guidelines, and document it per PMBP SOP #9, AAR. PMs will also complete the top portion of the design or construction Project Completion Report and ask the customer to complete the report. Forward the report to PPMD.

d. Programmatic AARs: PMs will schedule and conduct a formal AAR at least annually. Examples of programmatic AARs: Tripler Army Medical Center program; Inspection of Completed Civil Works program; Support For Others programs (various, such as support to DOE schools, etc).

e. Non-Project AARs: The District will conduct and document AARs for annual, recurring events as follows:

(1) Fiscal Year-end Closeout: Formal AAR conducted NLT 7 October. Facilitated by the Commander, published/tracked by Contracting Division.

(2) Emergency Response Missions: Informal AAR conducted NLT seven days after the event. Facilitated by the Deputy Commander, published/tracked by Emergency Management Office.

(3) Organizational Day: Informal AAR conducted NLT seven days after the event. Facilitated and published/tracked by the staff lead.

9. Scheduling AARs: PMs, leaders, managers, and supervisors will schedule AARs in accordance with the guidance herein on the District's Long Range Calendar. The Deputy

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Commander, Chief PPMD, and Chief, RM will monitor the calendar to ensure PMs and leaders schedule AARs per this policy.

10. I ask each member of the District to commit to improvement through the AAR process. As the District becomes a ***learning organization***, we take a step closer to making the District the best place for the best people to work.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D.C. Press".

DAVID C. PRESS
Lieutenant Colonel, EN
Commanding

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